

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



November 06, 2000

ERRATA**TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS****SUBJECT: CORRECTION TO ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) No. 00-52.**

The purpose of this errata is to correct two errors in ACL 00-52 dated August 7, 2000 which provided instructions to counties in certifying to full utilization of the Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS). Additionally, this Errata conveys two items omitted from the earlier ACL. And finally, we are attaching a Question and Answer aide to help counties develop their Letter of Certification.

The first correction is on the first page, second paragraph. In the original ACL, the first sentence of that paragraph should reflect \$34 million (GF) in new funding instead of \$43 million. An additional correction is to the second paragraph on page three referencing the availability of "on-demand reports" to counties. At this time, on-demand reports will not be made available to counties. Instead, the counties will have a Monthly Self-monitoring Utilization Indicator Report available to manage their compliance with the full utilization criteria.

The first item omitted from the ACL is a submission due date for county Letters of Certification. In order to reallocate the funds of those counties that fail to meet certification guidelines, counties must submit their letters no later than November 1, 2000 and no later than November 22, 2000. The final distribution of the augmentation will occur on December 6, 2000. Secondly, should any county fail to receive a letter from CDSS in response to a submitted Letter of Certification, it is paramount that they contact CDSS no later than November 22, 2000 at the number listed below.

If you have any questions, please contact the CMS Support Branch at (916) 445-2888. Should you have fiscal questions regarding this augmentation please contact your County Financial Analysis Bureau Analyst at (916) 657-3806.

FULL UTILIZATION **QUESTION AND ANSWER**

Definition of Full Utilization

- Q. Is there a penalty if the county certifies to full utilization and subsequently fails to meet the criteria by June 30, 2001?
- A. Counties are precluded from drawing down the augmentation unless they have certified to full utilization or have a California Department of Social Services (CDSS) approved plan for attaining full utilization.
- Q. Will county Boards of Supervisors need to attest to this certification of full utilization in the letter to the CDSS Director?
- A. No, only the County Welfare Director is required to certify to full utilization.

Certification Process

- Q. Is there a specific format to be used for the Letter of Certification to CDSS?
- A. No, CDSS has not specified a particular format for counties to use in the letter of certification. However, counties should be prepared to address all functional components comprising the full utilization criteria.
- Q. Are there time limitations in providing an alternate target date (accompanied by appropriate justification) for a county action plan that cannot be implemented by June 30, 2001?
- A. CDSS is committed to working with those counties, which cannot meet the target date given local business environments, in finding a reasonable timeframe in which to attain full utilization.

Monitoring

- Q. Will a navigational tool be added to the CWS/CMS application to help counties track their compliance to Full Utilization?
- A. A County Self-Reporting Indicator Report will be made available to help counties track their compliance.

- Q. Will the State conduct electronic or on-site audits to verify compliance?
- A. At this time the State is relying on counties to self-monitor their compliance to the criteria laid out under Full Utilization.
- Q. Will the state make available “on demand” reports to individual counties?
- A. The CDSS will not be creating on-demand reports as stated in ACL 00-52. The purpose of the County Self-Reporting Indicator Report is for the counties to self monitor to full utilization.

Fiscal claiming

- Q. When is the deadline to submit our certification letter to the California Department of Social Services?
- A. November 1, 2000.
- Q. Once our certification letter has been approved, when can we anticipate a notification of our approved augmentation amount?
- A. Unlike in prior years where a final allocation is provided after the deadline to submit certifications, once the CMS Support Branch approves a county’s certification, the County Financial Analysis Bureau will be notifying counties of their approved augmentation amounts on a bi-weekly basis, beginning September 15, 2000.
- Q. Is the formula for allocation changing because of CWS/CMS?
- A. No, at this time the allocation is distributed to all counties based on the individual county’s percent to statewide total FTEs with a minimum allocation of \$100,000 in total funds.
- Q. Are the allocated funds that are not spent to be rolled forward to the next fiscal year?
- A. No, the budget language does not contain a provision for rolling over any funds into the next fiscal year.
- Q. Is it possible to receive additional augmentation funds if some counties opt not to submit certification letters or have unapproved plans?
- A. Yes, if some counties don’t certify to the criteria required to access the augmentation funds (ACL 52-00 categories “a, b or c”), their proposed share would then be redistributed to the counties with approved plans.

- Q. When will the final distribution of the augmentation occur?
- A. December 6, 2000.
- Q. Will a county receive their share of the augmentation if they opt for option C noted in All County Letter # 00-52?
- A. Yes, per legislative language; “These funds are available only to counties that have certified that they are fully utilizing the CWS/CMS or have entered into an agreed-upon plan with the State department of Social Services outlining the steps that will be taken to achieve full utilization”. Based on this language, only those counties without an agreed upon plan would be ineligible for a share of the augmentation.
- Q. Will counties need to claim to a special code to access the augmentation funds?
- A. No, State-Use-Only (SUO) codes are utilized by CDSS to access the CWS augmentation funds. This occurs when counties’ claims are audited during the County Expense Claim process.
- Q. If a county fails to certify in this fiscal year but intends to do so in the next fiscal year would they still be eligible for the augmentation?
- A. No, funding is only available for this fiscal year. Any additional augmentation for the next year is dependent upon budget language stating such.
- Q. What is included in the total allocation?
- A. The total CWS allocation includes CWS Basic, CWS Augmentation and several programs within Child Welfare Services. Each program is identified in the CWS allocation letter for FY 00/01 (CFL NO. 00/01-18).

General questions

- Q. If our court system does not allow us to use the CWS/CMS court report functionality, does this preclude us from attaining full utilization and drawing down the augmentation?
- A. The certification process allows for full utilization exemptions based on uncontrollable local business environments. Counties must submit a valid business case reflecting local circumstances that make full utilization infeasible. Those exemption requests will be reflected in the County Self-Reporting Indicator Report as N/A.

- Q. If a county that does not do their own adoptions or the licensing of foster homes, are they responsible for the full utilization of the adoptions and licensing components?
- A. No, those counties in which the State fulfills these roles would not be held accountable. These areas will be reflected in the County Self-Reporting Indicator Report as N/A.
- Q. Would small counties, whose indicator report might not reflect any referrals in a given month, be deemed to be outside the scope of full utilization?
- A. No, counties would not be penalized
- Q. Does CDSS require a case plan on guardian cases opened for foster care?
- A. Yes, case plans are required to be completed within the system for guardian cases.
- Q. How can counties certify to using green fields if they are not available?
- A. The counties are only expected to certify to using the green fields once they become operational.
- Q. Is it expected to use the self monitoring report in September to certify?
- A. The purpose of the self-monitoring report is for counties to assess their status with full utilization, not for the State or for certification.
- Q. To be in full utilization, do you have to have a case plan in 30 days?
- A. Yes. This is more of an operational issue. i.e., you certify that your county business practice requires that all cases are to have a case plan within 30 days, hence, your adopted business practice meets full utilization criteria of that component.